

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 EB-11 COME-00 PM-07 DODE-00

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 MC-02 AID-20 IGA-02

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R 011340Z MAR 74

FM AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2377

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMCONSUL LUANDA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LOURENCO MARQUES 0139

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ESTC, ETRN, MOPS, MZ

SUBJECT: USE OF BELL HELICOPTERS IN MOZAMBIQUE

REF: LISBON 654

1. AM VIRTUALLY CERTAIN THAT "ACTION" MENTIONED IN PARA 5 REFTTEL REFERS TO USE BY GOVERNOR OF VILA PEREIRA OF BELL HELICOPTER AS MEANS OF QUICK TRANSPORT FROM ONE LOCALITY TO ANOTHER WITHIN HIS DISTRICT, AND NOT RPT NOT TO MILITARY ACTION.

2. HAVE AGAIN DISCUSSED USE OF BELL HELICOPTERS WITH PROVINCIAL SECRETARY OF COMMUNICATIONS, VILAR QUEIROZ. HE ASSURED ME BELLS ARE BEING KEPT UNDER STRICT CONTROL OF HIS MINISTRY AND WOULD NEVER BE USED FOR MILITARY ACTION BECAUSE:

(A) THIS WOULD BE AGAINST HIS WORD GIVEN TO ME; (B) SUCH USE COULD NOT BE KEPT SECRET AND ONCE KNOWN MIGHT MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIS GOVERNMENT TO BUY SPARE PARTS OR NEW CHOPPERS; (C) THE BELLS IN QUESTION ARE EXCEPTIONALLY VULNERABLE EVEN TO LIGHT GUN FIRE; (D) THE PILOTS ARE UNDER CONTRACT TO USE THE HELICOPTERS FOR CIVILIAN PURPOSES ONLY, AND WOULD REFUSE TO TAKE THEM INTO MILITARY ACTION, OR TO ALLOW PERSONS CARRYING WEAPONS ON BOARD.

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3. VILAR QUEIROZ INDICATED HE IS BRINGING OUT COL. ANDRADE FERNANDES FROM PORTUGAL TO ACT AS GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE IN CHARGE OF ALL HELICOPTER ACTIVITIES. AS SUCH COL. FERNANDES WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR SAFETY, PROPER TRAINING OF PILOTS, AND COORDINATING USE OF HELICOPTERS.

4. QUEIROZ ADMITTED THAT MILITARY HAVE AT TIMES TRIED TO PERSUADE HIM TO LET THEM USE HELICOPTERS FOR QUESTIONABLE PURPOSES BUT HE HAS ALWAYS REFUSED. HE SAID HE HAD AT FIRST BEEN CRITICIZED BY MANY FOR HIS EXTRAVAGANCE IN PURCHASING 12 BELL HELICOPTERS. NOW EVERYONE WANTS TO USE THEM AND HE HAS THREE TIMES AS MANY REQUESTS FOR THEIR USE FOR LEGITIMATE PURPOSES AS HE CAN SATISFY. HELICOPTERS ARE ESPECIALLY VALUABLE IN ASSISTING WITH FLOOD RELIEF, CHOLERA CONTROL, TRANSPORTING OFFICIAL PERSONNEL AND RESPONDING TO MANY EMERGENCY CALLS WHICH HAVE NO MILITARY CONNOTATIONS. HE WOULD GLADLY BUY MORE, BUT DOESN'T HAVE THE MONEY.
VAN OSS

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